

# THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN



# DOCTOR WHO



• AN ADVENTURE IN SPACE & TIME •



CODE : NN. M. Haisman & H. Lincoln

# Himalayas

## 1935

Every time I visit Det-sen in the Himalayas the monastery seems to be in some sort of trouble. Returning the Holy Ghanta - a Tibetan bell - three hundred years after it was entrusted to my safe keeping by their Master, Padmasambhava, during the attack in 1630, I was charged with the murders of three monks! Travers, an English explorer in search of the Abominable Snowman (Yeti to the locals), also accused me of murdering his companion!

Inexplicably, Yeti had besieged the monastery, and I was believed to be their controller. Nobody seemed to want to listen to me and everyone was jumping to the wrong conclusions. The leader of the warrior monks, Khrisong, decided to tie me to the monastery gates. It was believed that if I were guilty the Yeti would rescue me, and if I were innocent Khrisong would try to save me from attack! Before I was taken to the gate I gave Thormi, another warrior monk, the Ghanta to take to the Abbot Songtsen. Fortunately, it reached him in time and I was released before any real harm was done.

As it turned out, these 'Yeti' were fur-covered robots controlled by a Great Intelligence via self-propelling spheres which fitted into their chests. Now Travers was suspected by the monks as being the Yeti controller, even if I didn't believe he was responsible. I sensed something evil on the mountain, and Khrisong finally allowed me to help him after he was attacked by a Yeti. I used some tracking equipment from the TAROS to trace the source of the Yeti command signals. They were coming from the monastery itself, and the Yeti were being controlled by the Great Intelligence, which he had encountered on his journeys along the astral plane, and used as a medium. The Intelligence was tricked into providing the gateway for it.

Khrisong was murdered by a controlled Songtsen and I ensured that all the monks were safely evacuated from the monastery whilst Jamie, Victoria, Thormi and I did battle with the Intelligence. Victoria and I were locked in a mental struggle via Padmasambhava; Jamie and Thormi wrecked the Yeti controls - and thus the Yeti themselves - and then smashed the power source of the Intelligence. The Great Intelligence was destroyed and my old friend Padmasambhava died in final peace.

The Yeti were ingenious machines and it was almost a pity to destroy them; besides which, they really did look very cuddly! Unfortunately, they were immeasurably hostile; but, as Jamie says, they won't bother us again.

Travers sighted a real Yeti, and set off to track it down...

Dr 09

# DRAMA EXTRACT

"Why are you here?"

The sibilant voice echoed with disembodied menace from every corner of the ante-chamber. Jamie, Thonmi and Victoria halted in their tracks, exchanging startled looks with each other, but the Doctor was unimpressed.

"Why did you not heed my warning?" continued the voice. "You are stubborn, Doctor."

"Who are you?" he asked, addressing the thin air.

"You know well. It is I, the master, Padmasambhava, who speaks."

The Doctor shook his head vigorously. "Oh no, it isn't. I know Padmasambhava. He's my friend. Where have you come from? Why are you using his body in this fashion?"

"Such a brain as yours is too small to grasp my purpose," came the condescending reply.

"Too small..!" snorted the Doctor.

"I have such power," the voice went on. A second later, the flame burning in one of the incense burners flanking the doors to the inner sanctum erupted into fierce and bright life. Not to be outdone, the other burner lifted itself into the air and glided past the Doctor's three astounded companions. Unmoved, the Doctor turned once again to address the alien voice.

"Simple levitation," he said scornfully. "A childish trick. Now stop playing games and open up these doors - or are you afraid to meet me face to face?"

"You are rash," came the unemotional reply, and with nailbiting slowness, the twin doors to the inner sanctum swung silently open. Beyond the doorway, the chamber lay in darkness. Summoning up his reserves of courage the Doctor prepared to enter, but he paused first to speak urgently with his three friends.

"Anything can happen now. Just trust me and above all else, don't panic!"

Anxious, Victoria turned to Jamie and Thonmi, but they too were unsettled by the Doctor's words. Before they could react further, though, the Doctor had disappeared through the beckoning gates, his dark coat blending instantly into the blackness.

Suddenly a tortured cry of pain came from the sanctum and with horror Victoria recognised it as the voice of the Doctor.

Jamie was first into action. Gripping his monk's stave he started towards the doorway, only to feel Victoria's restraining hand on his arm.

"The Doctor said to wait," she reiterated, even as the ghastly shrieks continued.

Abruptly the cries died away. Cautiously, the three companions edged into the room, accustoming their eyes to the gloom. Before them, doubled up in a crouch of pain, they could perceive the shape of the Doctor, but even as they watched, he slowly drew himself upright into a standing position. Jamie could see the beads of sweat on his brow as he fought to resist the waves of malevolent mental energy surging at him from whatever lay behind the thin, curtained veil.

A ghostly wind arose from nowhere and as its power increased the veil was blown aside and the wizened form of Padmasambhava could be seen - a grim vitiation of life save for the bright, burning coals of his eyes. For a moment the power radiating from the figure halted them in their tracks, but as the furrows on the Doctor's face deepened Jamie felt his paralysis lifting.

"Now!" yelled the Doctor.

"Come on, Thonmi." With the young monk at his side Jamie raced for the altar of Buddha and pulled it to one side, revealing the hidden chamber filled with silver spheres. Lifting his stave he made to go in, but at that moment a blaze of light and sound issued forth from the room, temporarily blinding the two friends.

Above the sound of the wind and the noise, the cruel laugh of the Intelligence sang maddeningly in their ears.



# STORY REVIEW

Gary Hopkins

Few creatures to appear in 'Doctor Who' have needed as little introduction as the Abominable Snowmen. Stories of the Himalayan "Yeti" have generated public interest for many years, although no definite proof of their existence has ever been pre-



sented. In fact, still flushed with the success of his 'Quatermass' adventures at the BBC, writer Nigel Kneale pondered the question of the Yeti in his 1955 play 'The Creature'. Set on the bleak, snowy slopes of the Himalayas, and at the Rong-ruk monastery, the play followed the progress of the Tom Friend Expedition as the search continued for the elusive Yeti. The Expedition met with disaster, but the play was a success and received the 'Hammer' treatment two years later when it transferred to the cinema screen as 'The Abominable Snowman'.

Using Kneale's story as their starting point, writers Mervyn Haisman and Henry Lincoln set about constructing a six-part adventure for 'Doctor Who'. They would have a slightly eccentric English explorer in the Himalayas during the 1930s, a sinister monastery, strangely hostile Tibetan Buddhist monks and an even more hostile breed of Yeti. Into this they would weave a science fiction plot involving the crew of the TARDIS and the formless, evil Great Intelligence, poised to disturb the peace and monastic order of Det-sen and ultimately to take over the world.

How the disparate elements of the adventure are reconciled is through skilful plotting and careful attention to mood and atmosphere. The first episode opens as Edward Travers and his fellow explorer settle at their camp for the night. Suddenly a huge shape emerges from the darkness, killing Travers' companion and destroying the camp. The action progresses in a similar fashion for the rest of the episode, with emphasis upon the threat of the unknown. Convinced he will receive "the welcome of a lifetime" from the monks, the Doctor returns the Holy Ghanta - a Tibetan bell - to the Det-sen monastery, where it was entrusted to him three hundred years before, but is instead greeted with threats and suspicions. The monks explain that the once-timid Yeti have recently become aggressive, and that Det-sen is under constant threat of attack. Having spent twenty years of his life in search of the Yeti, Travers is disturbed by news of these attacks, but is nevertheless resolved to capture one of the creatures and take it back to England with him. Believing the Doctor to be "one of those wretched newspaper men" the explorer throws suspicion on to him in order to prevent his interference, but is quickly forced to admit his mistake when the situation becomes perilous...And so it continues, developing along the lines of a fairly typical period thriller, replete with exotic costumes and sharply-defined, recognisable characters.

Only towards the end of episode two does the fantasy element become apparent, as the travellers discover the real nature of the legendary Yeti. Haisman and Lincoln chose to ignore the scientific rationalisation which suggests the creatures may be hominid descendants of the giant ape Gigantopithecus. Not for them were the million and one other theories ranging from lost tribes to nomadic mountain goats, or the alcohol-induced hallucinations of gullible explorers. As a very imaginative twist the Yeti of 'Doctor Who' are fur-covered robots, manufactured in secret at the monastery by a four hundred year old High Lama, possessed by a powerful alien intelligence. Here they are merely elaborate guard-dogs, designed to strike fear into the hearts of the superstitious monks, to deter inquisitive explorers and to destroy the unwary. Vicious, powerful, virtually indestructible, the Yeti are controlled by the disembodied Great Intelligence and capable of an amazing and frightening turn of speed for monsters of such bulk.

The actions of the Yeti are guided by the master Padmasambhava, his emaciated body kept alive by the Great Intelligence only long enough for it to attain corporal existence. As he explains to the Abbot Songsten: "...The Great Intelligence will focus upon this planet. Soon it will begin to grow and at last take on physical form. At last its wanderings in space will be at an end." Through a remarkable feat of vocal acrobatics, actor Wolfe Morris was able to convey Padmasambhava's truly schizophrenic personality, alternating between the gentle, benevolent tone of the High Lama and the harsh sibilance of his evil possessor. For the largest part of the serial Padmasambhava is concealed behind a curtain in the Inner Sanctum, a dimly-lit chamber deep within the monastery from where he issues instructions to the Yeti out on the mountainside. His eventual appearance, though, completes the horror of a man who had had the life sucked from him, and who 'lives' only to serve, "a tool in the hands of a monstrous brain". (Wolfe Morris also played the part of the Expedition's guide Nima Kusang in both TV and cinema versions of Kneale's 'The Creature' - another interesting piece of 'Doctor Who' casting by Peter Bryant.)

"Victoria, I think this is one of those instances where discretion is the better part of valour. Jamie has an idea!" With that, the Doctor takes Victoria's hand and together they beat a hasty retreat into the shadowy cloisters...Patrick Troughton steals the show once again as the Doctor, demonstrating his gift for comic timing and his uncanny ability to shift with the mood and requirements of each and every scene. This time, however, he has solid support from Jack Watling as Travers, greatly at ease with his portrayal of the crusty explorer. Daughter Deborah Watling resumes her role as Victoria, a fiercely independent young lady in spite of her basic need for security and companionship. In one quite chilling sequence she speaks to the assembled monks with the voice of Padmasambhava, having succumbed easily to his hypnosis. Jamie and the young monk Thonmi vie for the task of protecting Victoria, although Thonmi is more often than not forced to follow her lead, while Jamie joins the Doctor to solve the mystery of the great hairy beasts.

Despite the noticeable absence of snow, North Wales passes quite well as part of the Himalayas. Moreover these outdoor sequences add freshness to the serial, the rest of which is confined to dark, grim-looking sets peopled by dark, grim-looking monks. At its worst the production becomes a little stagey; but for the most part credibility is maintained by strong performances from the cast, good story-telling from the writers and high production standards from the BBC.

A novel aspect of 'The Abominable Snowmen' is that it features no background music and relies entirely upon sounds provided by howling wind, chanting monks, a burst of 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' from the Doctor's recorder and a variety of bleeps and signals from the Yeti control spheres. This fact has its good and bad sides. The advantage is that the absence of music tends to reflect the bleak, spartan setting of the monastery where thought and prayer replace music and laughter. By the same token, the complete absence of music accentuates many of the long pauses throughout the serial and adds to the general feeling that the story plods rather than sprints. A gentle, oriental melody would have helped to complement the attractive dialogue, and wouldn't have been intrusive or at odds with the action.

Overall the plot is neat and tidy, with no obvious loose ends at its conclusion. However, the new policy of including more six-part adventures in 'Doctor Who' led to the fundamental mistake, in this instance, of providing for a story of six episodes only enough material for four.



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# "The Yeti"

## Hit... or myth?

Gary Russell



The Doctor considers his fate at Det-sen

### The Abominable Snowmen...

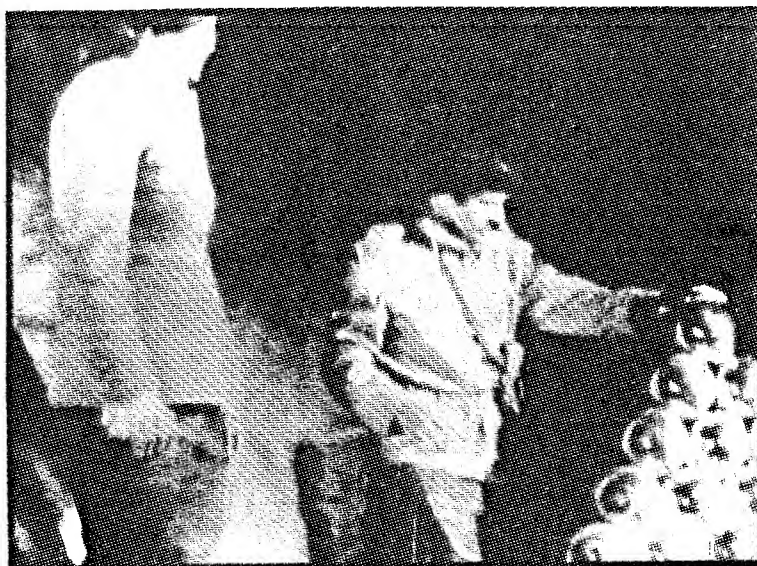


It was a common link between Patrick Troughton and Henry Lincoln that set the sphere rolling. The two actors had known each other for many years, and it was Troughton who suggested that Lincoln should write something for 'Doctor Who'. Having just completed a mammoth stint in 'Emergency Ward 10', Lincoln teamed up with Mervyn Haisman and proposed the Yeti as new monsters for the show. Troughton and producer Innes Lloyd liked the idea and so the Abominable Snowmen were born...or rather built.

Reports of the elusive beasts varied from them looking like bears, to them looking like apes. Haisman remembers that all they wanted was a large creature, with no other firm ideas except that it should have large feet and be furry. Eventually, however, the writers thought it would be a bit pointless handing their creature over to the designers and formulated their own rough design. The Yeti

### Victoria and Jamie puzzle over the pyramid of spheres

would be built on bamboo frames, padded with foam rubber and covered with fur; large; powerful; but menacing? Unfortunately the Yeti had a double-edge. Whilst big enough to flatten a house, children found them cuddly; hardly surprising, as they did resemble the average Teddy bear and weren't really bad in themselves. Myth has painted them as friendly and, despite the story's efforts to anti-theseise this, the fact that they were merely robots obeying their Master's will tended to undermine any fear of them. As one reporter on the set of 'The Abominable Snowmen' explained: "The Yeti did not turn out quite as terrifying as planned. Small children who came to watch the filming thought they were lovely and kept patting them and stroking their fur!" Little could detract from that image, although Mervyn Haisman tried to dampen the reaction by claiming that "they appeared to be cuddly, friendly creatures,

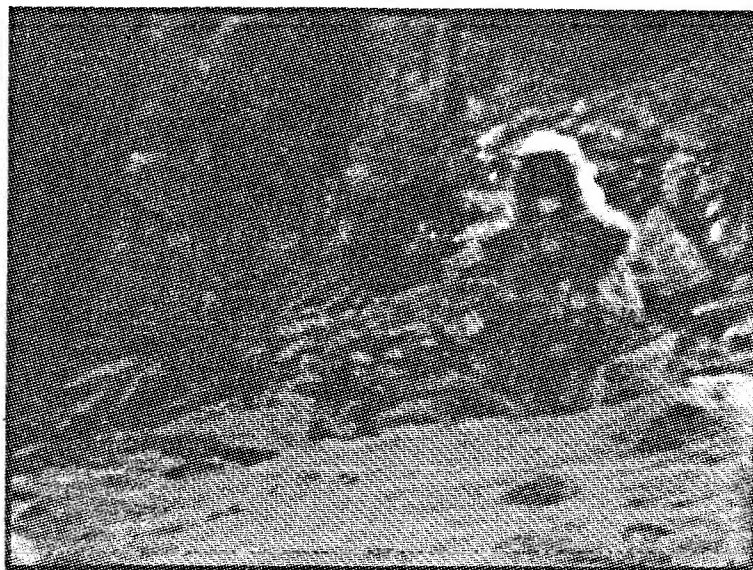




"They're shy, elusive creatures. Why do you think it's taken me so long to track them down...?"

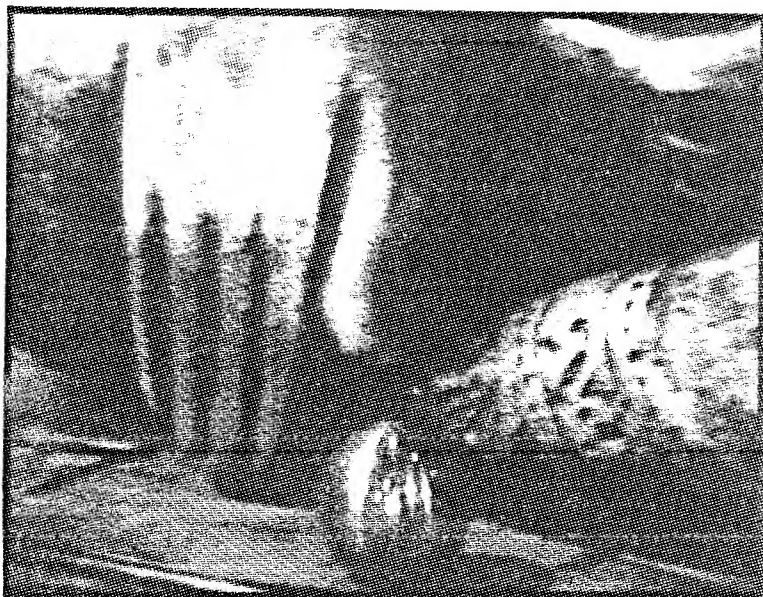
I corpsed rigidly...so they had to shoot us in different parts of the studio, supposedly talking to each other. Every time the director lost his rag, it just made us worse!" Another incident Jones remembers well highlights another design fault in the costumes. "We had lots of fights and during rehearsals these Yeti, all eight feet of them, shuffled about like those things on 'It's a Knockout'; and me, being the swine I am, used to push these poor defenceless Yeti over, which meant they couldn't get up again!" Mervyn Haisman recalls this headache, adding that the Yeti also presented people with the problem of identification - which actor was inside which costume? Despite the fact that every Yeti was identical, however, Haisman comments that Gerald Blake had "an uncanny knack of saying 'Oh Fred, move forward a bit, will you?' and, sure enough, it was Fred inside".

Apert from their attraction as



A Yeti springs into action

A Yeti control sphere within the monastery



and yet within lay such menace". He is well aware of the danger of exploiting youngsters' fears but feels they could still have gone further, believing that if you have a menace then "it's a cop-out not to show what that menace can do".

Once on the screen, of course, the menace was obvious. Crushed by falling rocks, speared and even held within a "spirit trap", the Yeti could not be halted. Seeing this as a disadvantage (as no-one likes an invincible enemy), Haisman and Lincoln devised the crystal control spheres for the monsters - remotely-controlled devices which actor Norman Jones (Khrisong) remembers very well. In one scene, a sphere had to 'climb' onto a table and place itself inside a Yeti chest-unit. The ensuing chaos, as Jones and Troughton got a fit of the giggles, resulted in director Gerald Blake refusing to allow the two actors on set together. "Patrick and

'cuddly', the Yeti had other things in their favour. Firstly, the concept was one based heavily on mythology, and therefore little substantiated fact. No-one could produce photographs of Yeti, or say what 'language' they roared, or how they walked, thus presenting the writers with the enviable task of taking something about which people have preconceived ideas and playing around with it until they got what they wanted. Jamie is the only person who doesn't know what an Abominable Snowman is, but Victoria soon puts him in the picture.

As well as this the Yeti, being robots, clearly had the option (like Daleks and Cybermen) of returning at some future date. Living races like the Chameleons, the Voord and the Monoids can be pacified, demoralised or blown up, but robots aren't quite so easy to despatch. It was therefore hardly surprising that, as the Yeti were an instant hit, "we were straight away asked to devise a sequel..."

# TECHNICAL OBSERVATIONS

Despite the overall changes taking place in the Production team (see 'Tomb of the Cybermen' page "37-10"), for the first story of the new recording block the roles of Producer and Script Editor were very firmly defined, with Peter Bryant having found and commissioned the established writing team of Mervyn Haisman and Henry Lincoln - neither of them strangers to the field of science fiction and fantasy.

Innes Lloyd used the freedom of this being the first story of the season's "treadmill" to mount a major location shoot, taking the 'Doctor Who' production team even further afield than their Cornish venture with 'The Smugglers' (Serial "CC").

The venue selected for 'the Himalayas' was Snowdonia in North Wales, a desolate part of the country with an impressive range of mountains to double for the famous Tibetan range. A full week was scheduled for the location filming, but as things turned out the film crew was only just able to get all their desired shots 'in the can'.

Problem number one was the time of year. The crew visited Snowdonia in the height of summer, hence there was not a flake of snow anywhere to be seen - a fact eventually glossed over in the storyline (although inconsistently snow was seen as stock footage on the TARDIS scanner in the first episode). Secondly, although it was the supposed height of summer, temperatures up in the Welsh mountains were biting cold and made all the more so by a persistent and fierce chill wind. Lastly, it rained...and rained...and rained...For two days solid the film crew and cast were confined to their hotel and for the remainder of the week thereafter heavy squalls of rain were a constant threat, making the mountain paths slippery and treacherous, especially to the actors in the Yeti costumes.

Despite the problems, however, the shooting proved to be a newsworthy event, with one of the days seeing the location being visited by a news film crew from "Wales Today" who managed a short, screened interview with Patrick Troughton and Innes Lloyd.

A senior staff director at the BBC, Gerald Blake, elected to use no incidental music whatsoever for this story. The carried-over reprises were never longer than ten seconds and, with the exception of episode one, all the opening credits were merged in with the title sequence, thus making the sequence a full 25 seconds long.

A band from a stock album of monastic chants was heard as background several times during the story. The passage used was called "Morning Prayer", performed by the monks of the Sakya sect.

A short, but expensive, sequence of night shooting was scheduled for the opening scene in episode one as Travers' companion, John, is killed by a 'shadow' from the darkness. This sequence, which ends with a huge lumbering shadow tossing a twisted rifle onto the camp fire, was followed by the caption slides naming the story, the writers and the episode number.

Visual Effects Designer Ron Oates and assistant Ulrich Grosser built and filmed a miniature of the Det-Sen Monastery for all the establishing shots seen from a high vantage point. The same duo also built a whole variety of fragile props which could be smashed by the Yeti to demonstrate their great strength.

No Yeti was seen fully until the very end of the first episode. Up until then all that had been visible was the odd foot, claw and 'behind the shoulder' view of an arm.

In all, four Yeti costumes were made for this story designed by costume expert Martin Baugh. The Costume Department provided the basic bamboo frame which supported the heavy layer of backed fur. They also provided the cavity in which the control spheres would sit. Visual Effects provided the rubber claws and feet as well as the control spheres themselves. Brian Hodgson, using the Radiophonic Workshop's very first synthesiser, produced the famous Yeti "bleeps", although this generation of Yeti did not roar. Foam plastic padded out the Yeti suits making them uncomfortably hot to wear in the Lime Grove studios, but perfect for the location filming.

The Yeti spheres were the brainchild of Ron Oates. The

majority were lightweight vacuum-formed creations. One robust but static one was used by the artists for any scenes involving handling the sphere. The most complex one, however, was fully radio controlled, like a Cybermat, with tiny wheels underneath to propel it along smooth floors when required to 'act on cue'.

Set Designer Malcolm Middleton put together the map table and chess pieces in Padmasambhava's sanctum. The map, slightly larger than an average chess board, was a flat map of the area in and around the Monastery, criss-crossed by latitude and longitude lines. The plaster Yeti figures were each mounted on small bases.

Padmasambhava's hands were seen as thin, boney appendages tipped with incredibly long and tapering fingernails. These were Wolfe Morris' own hands after treatment by the Make-up artist.

Pre-cut chain links were added to those securing the deactivated Yeti in the monastery, to make all the more frightening the scene in which the creature comes back to life and bursts free. To show the sphere entering the Yeti's stomach pouch the radio-controlled one was first moved along the ground until it disappeared behind the leg of a table. At that moment one of the lightweight spheres was hauled manually, by wire, up the leg and over on to the Yeti's chest.

A fire-fighting foam machine - first discovered and bought for the Special Effects Department by Bernard Wilkie - was pressed into service for this story, to provide the vast quantities of glutinous material erupting from the pyramid planted in the cave by Songsten.

A tube was run from the foam machine to the plinth which rested the glowing pyramid. On cue, an electrical detonator split open the vacuum-formed pyramid, disgorging the foam, which was mixed to a particularly thick consistency for this serial. This sequence and the subsequent live action one, were done on film at Ealing.

Heavy make-up was worn by Wolfe Morris for his role as Padmasambhava. Layers of latex rubber, cotton and 'old age stipple' were blended to crinkle his features to those of an incredibly old man. At the same time, the head was deliberately made to look larger than his emaciated body to emphasise the effects of his possession.

The full size Buddha prop was not destroyed in the scene where the two Yeti topple it onto the body of Rinchen. The two Yeti were seen beginning to move it, then the shot cut to a camera zooming in and past the head (thereby suggesting the head toppling forward). A recording break was scheduled, after which the next shot seen was the crushed body of Rinchen, lying beneath a scattered pile of masonry.

A model stage was constructed to show the glutinous mass of the Intelligence engulfing the entire peak. A heavy gell was applied to this model, which was then shot as a night time set with lights playing over it, so that the gell appeared to be softly glowing.

Several mechanical effects were used in the studio for the final confrontation between the Doctor and Padmasambhava. A gas jet was fitted to one of the incense burners to make it flare on cue. Another burner had wires attached, to enable it to float into the air; levitated by the master.

Flash charges were fitted into the Yeti chest compartments for the moment of the Intelligence's defeat. Each charge was detonated on cue (in the studio!) electrically, with the actors inside being well insulated against burns by the rigid nature of the compartments themselves.

A highly intricate latex model of Padmasambhava's head and shoulders was built for his death scene. By dripping a solvent on to this static prop the face was made to melt and dissolve. The end result was considered too horrific, though, and the scene was considerably shortened to show just a quick glimpse of the face dissolving.

Moments later a telecine insert of the mountainside model exploding was edited into the action.

A Yeti costume, minus most of its bamboo inner cage, was used for the closing sequence as Travers runs off after a 'real (?)' abominable snowman.

The final episode was followed, on November 4th, by a specially filmed trailer for the next serial. Shot at Ealing, the trailer featured Peter Barkworth and Peter Sallis setting the characters and the storyline for 'The Ice Warriors'.

# PRODUCTION CREDITS

## SERIAL "NN"

## SIX EPISODES

## BLACK AND WHITE

PART 1	-	30th. September 1967
PART 2	-	7th. October 1967
PART 3	-	14th. October 1967
PART 4	-	21st. October 1967
PART 5	-	28th. October 1967
PART 6	-	4th. November 1967

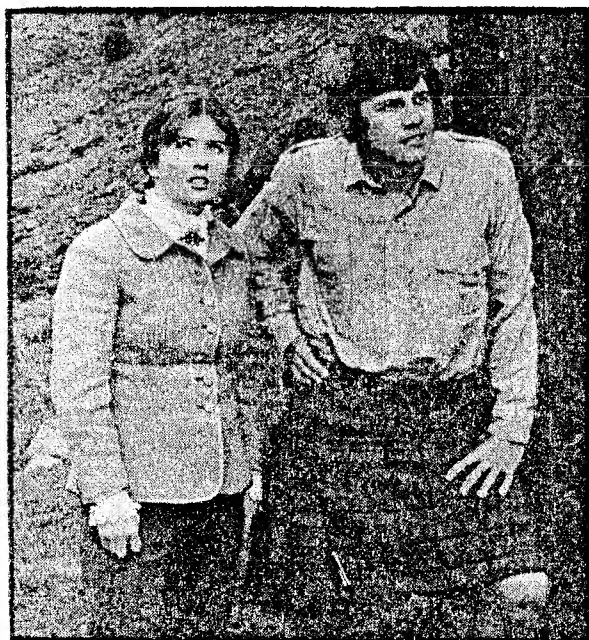
## CAST

Doctor Who.....Patrick Troughton  
 Jamie.....Frazer Hines  
 Victoria.....Deborah Watling

Travers.....Jack Watling  
 Khrisong.....Norman Jones  
 Thonmi.....David Spenser  
 Rinchen.....David Grey  
 Sapan.....Raymond Llewellyn  
 Songsten.....Charles Morgan  
 Padmasambhava.....Wolfe Morris  
 Ralpachan.....David Baron  
 Warrior Monks.....Pat Gorman  
                     Crawford Lyle, Richard King  
                     Michael Durham, Barry Du Pre  
                     Antonio de Maggio

Lamas.....Richard Atherton  
                     Bobby Beaumont, Terry Nelson  
                     Charles Finch, Jack Rowland  
                     Roger Bowdler

Yeti.....Reg Whitehead  
                     Tony Harwood, Richard Kerley  
                     John Hogan



## TECHNICAL CREDITS

Production Assistant..Marjorie Yorke  
 Assistant Floor Manager

Roselyn Parker  
 Assistant.....Judy Shears  
 Grams Operator.....John Howell  
 Vision Mixer.....Shirley Coward  
 Floor Assistant.....Bernard Doe  
 Lighting.....Howard King  
 Sound.....Norman Bennett  
                     Alan Edmonds

Technical Managers.....Lance Wood  
                                     Fred Wright

Film Cameramen.....Peter Bartlett  
                                     Ken Westbury

Film Editor.....Philip Bernikel  
 Visual Effects.....Ron Oates

Ulrich Grosser  
 Costume Supervisor.....Martin Baugh  
 Make-up Supervisor.....Sylvia James

Story Editor.....Peter Bryant  
 Designer.....Malcolm Middleton

Producer.....Innes Lloyd  
 Director.....Gerald Blake